Volume 6, Issue 45   Atari Online News, Etc.   November 5, 2004

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A-ONE #0645   11/05/04

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    ~ New HighWire Update!   ~ People Are Talking!    ~ Can-Spam Slammed!
    ~ Four More for Dub-yah! ~ Larry Still Misbehaves ~ New Cresus beta Out!
    ~ Users Invite Spyware!  ~ Net Banking Phish Scam ~ AtarICQ Updated!
    ~ IE Losing Market Share ~ SpamNet After Phish!   ~ New LOTR Ships!


                    -* Spyware: Scourge of Internet *-
                  -* Companies Scrambling With Spyware!  *-
                -* Two Guilty In First Felony Spam Conviction *-
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->From the Editor's Keyboard   "Saying it like it is!"
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""

Well, I hope that Joe's constant reminders and lessons on civic duty led all
of you eligible voter to get to the polls this week. Yes, I cast my ballot.
Although I was not overly impressed with either presidential candidate
(four, actually), I voted. All I gotta say when people whine to me about
'Dub-yah' is: Don't blame me, I'm from New England!" My hat is off to all
of those who waited hours in line to vote. Fortunately, I was in and out of
my voting precinct in a matter of minutes; I was anticipating long lines.

I haven't done any ranting and raving in awhile, so let me just do a little
bit this week. The news this past year has been inundated with stories of
the proliferation of viruses, spam and phishing scams. Other than the fact
that there are idiots out there who create and send this stuff, but what
about the majority of people who fall for them. You hear of the vast
numbers of people and systems who are victimized by this garbage. But, what
I'd like to see are reports of how these people fall prey to this stuff.
Okay, so viruses are likely the toughest to avoid if you're not careful.
But, there are various ways to protect your peecee from attack. Spam is
pretty easy to identify, so just delete it or find a way to filter some of
it out. I know, it's not as simple as it sounds. Phishing scams? I'm
sorry, but people have to be pretty stupid, or extremely gullible to fall
for most of these scams. At least that's the way it appears to me.

Until next time...


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                           Cresus beta 8

Bonjour :)

New release of my banks accounts manager named Cresus. You can download
the beta 8 on my homepage or directly in the folder:
http://rajah.atari.org/files/ -> cresusb8_uk.zip (170 KB)

Features:
- bug fixes:

- display error on balance amounts (cents in 'n.100')
      - when confirming an automatic transaction, the changes
        (date, checking, amount) affects only the one displayed,
        not the next transactions.
      (Thanks to Strider)
      - BubbleGEM font height is no more set.
    + transactions filtering (tip: "Select all" selects only
      the only remaining transactions)
    + transactions printing (see "Misc")
      - GDOS or compatible (default) or GEMDOS
      - A4 (default) or US-letter
      - to printer or clipboard (metafile *.GEM or *.TXT)
    + transactions export, to text file with TAB for
      field separator, and CR+LR for lineends.

Printing tests ware done with a HP DeskJet 500. Please mail me if you
encounter problems (bad margins ?). With NVDI and vector fonts, the
printing is pretty.

The 1.0 is near to completion, before Xmas. Lacks a tutorial in the
STGuide documentation, bug fixes and a few minor functions (remaining
test RAM). The import and stat/graphs modules will be coded only
if sufficient registrations and if truly needed.

Tchuss :)

-- Pierre TONTHAT - Rajah Lone / Renaissance
http://rajah.atari.org

                       New Version of Highwire Browser

The web browser for Atari TOS compatible computers has been released in the
new version 0.2.2. Most important changes are relating to the cache
handling and the graphical user interface.

http://highwire.atari-users.net/

                          AtarICQ 0.161 Released

GokMasE has announced:

At last I got time to fix up documentation and stuff for the 0.161 release
of AtarICQ! For those who don't know, AtarICQ is a GEM application that
allows you to chat to your friends via the ICQ network. A STiK compatible
internet connection is required and a 640x400 or better resolution is
recommended.

In this new release you will find these most noticeable changes and
additions:

* Possibility to set how long aICQ should wait until a message is
considered to be read. AtarICQ will count the time from the moment that the
user starts view a contact message with the message window topped! If you
temporarily have another window topped, aICQ will reset the timer.

* Lots of general changes and additions to preferences for a change. Check
them out, should hopefully be logical to figure stuff out. If not, have a
look in the HYP.

* A _very_ nasty bug fixed, which would make AtarICQ crash upon certain
AV-messages. Thanks to Martin Byttebier for patience during tests.

* Internal handling of contact data has been reworked, allowing for better
flexibility which might prove important for future additions.

* The routine for unshading windows now uses WIND_SET(hdl&,22365,0,0,0,0)
to allow it to work also with new XaAES.

* Fixed a problem where TT-RAM would (if present) was reserved for the DMA
sound buffer.

http://www.ataricq.org/

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                      PEOPLE ARE TALKING
                     compiled by Joe Mirando
                       joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, the election is finally over. I've
got to say that it's been a strange time. In some ways, even stranger
than the year 2000 election.

This country is incredibly divided right now, and there are those in
other countries are scratching their heads and trying to figure out how
we get anything done. To be honest, I can see their point.

What the entire country needs to do now is to find a way to work together
without all the partisan nonsense. Quite honestly, I doubt that we'll
finish the healing process in the next four years. But we will get it
done, and we'll be better for it.

To those who've emailed me to remind me that America isn't the only
country in the world that votes, I can only say that I understand that,
and its not my intention to minimize their systems. But let's face it,
we are the last remaining super power, and what we do must stand as an
example.

The election is one thing, but the true test of our system is how we deal
with it after the election, how we deal with the world, and how the
world deals with us.

As for my promise to tell you who I supported during the campaign, I'll
end the suspense right now. <grin>

Since I prize intelligence and open-mindedness, I had no choice but to
support Senator Kerry. Those two qualities are going to be in short
supply over the next four years.

Well, let's get on with the real purpose of this column, the news, hints, tips and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
===================================

'Donner' asks about partitioning a <gack> PC hard drive:

"I bought a PC-Notebook about 1-1/2 years ago and
only use my Atari computers for serious work. I use
the PC for the Internet only.

So I think its about time to force myself to get familiar
with "Windows XP-Pro". So could use some help with
the following questions?

1.   Should I partition the 20-Gig Hard Drive, and if so how
           is it done??
2.   Are there any good Utilities available for the PC like
           a good File Selector??
3.   Or should I just look around for a good O/S??"

Stephen Moss tells Donner:

"I would partition it and arrange it this way...
C is a primary DOS partition make it 3 times larger that XP requires -
this should allow room for XP, the SP2 update and extra space for more
updates. Once XP is running search for "partitions" in the help menu,
this should take you to a disk manager from where you can select and
format the rest of the HD as another partition.
Install any other software you have on this other partition eg
X:\Program Files\software name where X is the drive letter.

The reason for this is that you then keep all your
installing/removing/deleting file operations on this other partition
(unless you re-installing the OS) so you can perform them safe in the
knowledge that your not deleting OS relevant files and thus your
laptop will still boot up in the morning. Also move your "My
Documents" folder to this partition.

As for software I have files for Win 95, 98, and XP boot floppies from
which you would use Fdisk to format and partition your HD before
installing your OS. You can either do a search for "windows boot
disks" or I would E-Mail you one. If your Laptop came with a recovery
disk that probably has partition software on it although you may have
to select the expert as opposed to consumer (or basic) option which
would just create on partition.

I'm not sure about this one [utilities] but what I do to keep an Atari
esq feel is to place shortcuts for my HD partition, Floppy Drive and CD
ROM on the Desktop so that I can access them quickly as opposed to
having to go through 'My Computer'."

Greg Goodwin adds something that I was thinking myself:

"I'd recommend you purchase a copy of Linux (like SUSE or Mandrake), as it would address all your questions.

First of all, all modern Linux systems have the to partition your drive in order to install a "dual-boot" setup. That means that on startup you can choose between Windows and Linux by pressing a key (much like XBoot on the Atari). Hence they include the partitioning software required. Your existing Windows files will not be harmed.

Secondly, between Gnome and KDE you are likely to find a file selector you like.

Thirdly, should you dislike all the above O/S, you can (and probably should in any event) install both STeem and Aranym. Then you can keep the bulk of your existing software in use. There's no point buying new software unless you want the new features."

Edward Baiz adds:

"1) My son's notebook does fine with one big partition, but I will make about 3. I would use one for backups and the others for everyday use.

2)Do not know this one, but I would imagine they are out there some where.

3)If you can install Linux, I would do it. Nice OS..."

Donner asks Edward:

"Are you running "LINUX" on your HADES? I've never used it on the Atari's and would not have the foggiest notion of how to install it on the PC. without a Auto folder and a Hard-Driver Prg, I've no clue as to what this PC is doing, I get the feeling that windows wants you to be totally dependent on windows."

Ronald Hall also mirrors my thoughts:

"If you're gonna try Linux - then I would highly recommend Mandrake Linux.
Its geared toward desktop users.

I have an extreme dislike for anything Microsoft..."

Jim DeClercq adds:

"As to file selectors, one resounding NO, or non-resounding nope.

A programmer I know still uses Windows 2 for programming, because the one good file selector he knows of was never upgraded, or downgrades, for the next poor try by Microsoft at writing an operating system.

On other topics, get Partition Magic, and follow directions.

Other utilities, see Norton. "

Our old friend Hallvard Tangeraas asks about Atari emulation on a PC:

"I don't have time to mess around trying to find out what'll work, how to set things up etc. so....

of the many Atari ST emulators available for Windows, which one is easiest to set up and use?

I believe that some of these emulators are made just for .ST or .MSA disk image files, but I need to run a few simple ".PRG" or ".APP" programs, preferably in hires mode."

Greg Goodwin asks the important question and gives some opinions:

"What programs are you trying to run?

I use Gemulator (Jun 22 2000 version, NOT the last version) for my Windows Atari emulation needs. It appears to run every GEM-based application I've thrown at it. Gemulator does not care for non-GEM software much, but most applications use GEM. Please note that I have had trouble with Gemulator under WinXP, but Win98 works fine.

STeem is looking increasingly promising. I ran the latest version a couple of days ago under WinXP and it ran the few programs I tried without any problems, including a few games. One limitation of STeem is that it cannot map the floppy to drive A:. However, it CAN map it as a hard drive sector like D:. (Don't remove the floppy while running the emulator, though.)

For both emulators you will need to have a parallel port printer. Neither can remap printing to the USB port as yet.

In short, I would try STeem first."

Hallvard replies:

"I ended up giving it [GEMulator] a try (downloaded it from: http://www.emulators.com/gemul8r.htm) and it works fine here. I couldn't figure out STeem properly (too impatient) and have to say it seems to work very well indeed! And easy to set up.

The only thing I couldn't figure out at first was how to get control back of the mouse pointer in Windows, but now I know that I simply have to click *both* mouse buttons at once.

A question to other GEMulator users: is it possible to make the tiny (at least on a 1024x768 screen) Atari ST desktop bigger -for example twice as big?"

Greg tells Hallvard:

"Try F11 [to get the mouse back in Windows].

Pop winsizer.prg or vgawin.prg into your "auto" folder [to get a larger ST screen]."

'Paolo' asks about a hard drive problem:

"I just had a weird power fault in my area, the kind with blinking lights, and unfortunately I just had my falcon in the boot process. Now, my boot IDE disk won't boot anymore. I can see it's there with my HD utilities, along with the either IDE and the SCSI one, but I can't access it. Looong time ago, it happened something similar and I remember I had to reformat it. May I do something different now? Don't know, like restoring the boot sectors or such?"

Kiselo Zelje tells Paolo:

"Yep, seems it got corrupted and you need to reformat it (or just repartition it)... data still could be saved, but I guess data recovery is too expensive..."

'Geek' adds:

"Well I'd say it's likely that you need to reformat it, but definitely check first whether or not the drive is recognized and readable from the hd utils themselves. You should be able to run ahdi.prg or whatever and then be able to read from the hdd. if you can't you probably need to reformat it. If you can, then you probably just need to run consistency check and reinstall th hdd-boot stuff to the boot sector."

Greg Goodwin adds:

"A common side effect of a power failure is that the hard drive writes garbage to a few sectors as the power goes down. While the drive rarely "dies", the sectors that were overwritten might be blank, your important documents, or the boot sector. A program like Diamond Edge might be able to help, and there are expensive data recovery houses that can certainly help, but for most of us the advice above will be taken."

'Tim' asks about availability of STOS:

"I heard that STOS was released freeware, where can I get the disks for download?"

Lonny Pursell tells Tim:

"http://www.clickteam.com/English/download_section.php?PID=2&SID=5&Sname=Main+Download "

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section   - New PlayStation 2 Price Set!
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""""   ATV Offroad Fury 3 Ships!
                                    'Larry' Still Behaving Badly!
                                    And much more!


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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News   - The Latest Gaming News!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

             Sony Sets PlayStation 2 at $149.99 for U.S. Market

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. on Monday said it set a retail
price for its new PlayStation 2 video game console of $149.99.

Sony Computer, a unit of Japan's Sony Corp., said the PlayStation 2 is now
available in retail stores in preparation for the holiday season.

                            ATV Offroad Fury 3

ATV Offroad Fury 3 is the third installment in the multimillion selling
racing franchise that provides intense, free-roaming offroad racing
gameplay, packed with additional courses, larger environments, extra modes,
mini-games, more ATVs, online gameplay via the Network Adaptor
(Ethernet/Modem) (for PlayStation 2) and future support for the internal
Hard Disk Drive (40GB)(for PlayStation 2).

Through both on- and offline gameplay, players will be able to tear it up
anywhere and blaze their own trail, choosing from more than 24 highly
detailed ATVs - including six competing ATVs in all singleplayer and
multiplayer modes that offer varied gameplay. With visually stunning
backgrounds featuring water and mud effects and fully interactive objects
and instances such as ramps, tires, cones and trees, ATV Offroad Fury 3
will include a new short track, one-day events and Olympic championships.

Playable from both first- and third-person perspectives, ATV Offroad Fury 3
features two main modes of play containing race, freestyle, career,
mini-games and multiplayer games. Other modes will include a training
course and waypoint editor. In ATV Offroad Fury 3, players will have the
ability to race in more than 30 unique environments with six distinct
terrain types including snow, dirt, mud, ice, water and grass, as well as
compete in eight exciting mini-games including king of the hill, treasure
hunt, tag, hockey, soccer, basketball and pre-load - to play in all
multi-player modes.

Supporting up to six players online with voice-chat capabilities via the USB Headset (for PlayStation 2), ATV Offroad Fury 3, includes a new comprehensive online scoreboard system that records event data for players and clans within all race types.

KEY FEATURES

* Six race modes including: Practice, Lap Attack, Single Race, Championships, Freeride and multiple Multiplayer games.
  o Practice - Players may ride any available course for an unlimited duration. The game will also include a training course and waypoint editor.
  o Lap Attack - Players turn in their best time and race against the clock to better it while mastering the track before race time.
  o Single Race - Players compete against each other or the artificial intelligence on any available course.
  o Championships - Players compete in a variety of championships to earn a gold, silver or bronze trophy and unlock new ATVs, tracks and other goodies. Mode includes a new short track, One-day events and Olympic championships.
  o Freeride - Players drive anywhere, as long as they want, on any available environment without lap count or time restrictions.
  o Multiplayer:
    + Duel - Players compete directly against one another, without additional computer riders on the track.
    + Online - Gameplay with up to 6 players featuring all-new comprehensive online scoreboard system recording event data for players and clans within all race types. Will include support for USB keyboard and USB headset (for PlayStation 2).
    + Mini-games - Eight mini-games including king off the hill, treasure hunt, tag, hockey, soccer, basketball and preload.

* Featuring 24 highly detailed ATV's
  o New vehicle tuning system allowing players to change tire type and gear ratios.
  o Up to 20 customizable component parts for both your bike and rider along with color designs and logos to place on panels and rider liveries - showing rider experience in events. New Garage mode storing the player's complete progression and unlocked data, including vehicles, component parts and rider liveries.
    * Visually stunning backgrounds with water and mud effects and fully interactive objects and instances such as ramps, tires, cones and trees.
    * 6 distinct terrain types - snow, dirt, mud, ice, water and grass each with distinct handling properties.
    * 34 freestyle tricks including combos and linkers.

OutRun2 for Xbox Ships

Microsoft announced that Outrun 2 for Xbox is available now at North American retail stores for $39.99 (U.S.). Drivers are encouraged to grab their copies and to get set for the unbridled speed and nostalgic fun of the true arcade racer.

OutRun2 is the sequel to the famous game that made its first appearance in arcades across the world 17 years ago. With gameplay reminiscent of the

steadfast driving game, remixes of the original soundtracks and exclusive
Xbox Live- head to head gameplay, OutRun2 stays true to its predecessor
while kicking it up a notch. Developed by AM2/SEGA, OutRun2 puts gamers
into the Italian leather driver's seat of eight different Ferraris, from
the traditional Testerossa to the highly coveted Ferrari Enzo. Players can
speed through several tracks set against spectacular environments inspired
by some of the most beautiful locations around the world. Whether players
are power-drifting around the desert pyramids and medieval castles or
accelerating over high mountains tops, OutRun2's distinctive and addictive
gameplay will appease any racing fan. Gamers of all ages will find the
pick-up-and-play controls make the game accessible and fun for everyone,
while several of the game's missions still provide plenty of challenges for
more experienced players. Players can also take on up to seven of their
buddies over Xbox Live in head-to-head multiplayer challenges in an all-out
finish to the end of the course. OutRun2's Xbox Live features also allow
players to compare their times with other drivers on the leader scoreboard
or to download the best runs and ghost race against them to improve their
skills.

'Larry' Series Is Still Behaving Badly

As founder and president of PRUDES (People Revolted by Unnecessary
Depictions of Eroticism and Sexuality), I am shocked - shocked! - by
"Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude."

The new computer and console game from Sierra, Vivendi Universal and High
Voltage Software has no redeeming social value. Its only goal is to use
various minigames to strip down beautiful cartoon women so Larry, a
vertically challenged symbol of sloth and sexism, can engage them in some
horizontal hokey pokey.

"Magna Cum Laude" has swimming sperm. It has a talking penis (but gives it
a rather small speaking role). It has porn fairies. It's filled with
frat-level humor. It has buttons devoted to making the hero urinate or
break wind. It has spanking.

PRUDES everywhere should be warned about this game.

This is the seventh adventure in the 17-year-old Leisure Suit Larry
franchise. Until now, all have featured Larry Laffer, an unfashionably
dressed guy with a whiny voice and a monk-like bald spot "covered" with
three combed-over strands of hair. Larry thinks he is God's gift to women.
Women know better.

The sixth game - misnumbered "Leisure Suit Larry 7: Love for Sail" because
a "Leisure Suit Larry 4" was never released - came out in 1996. It was set
aboard a cruise ship, the P.M.S. Bouncy, where clothing was optional, and
included a scratch-and-sniff card, a perverse parody of "Where's Waldo,"
and a Bill Clinton robot that told jokes like, "Do you know what I say to
Hillary right before sex? See you in an hour, honey!"

These games have not marked a crowning achievement in societal development.

In "Magna Cum Laude," Mr. Laffer plays a minor role. Instead, the star is
Larry's short, big-headed nephew, Larry Lovage, a student at Walnut Log
Community College.

Young Larry may have more hair, but he is just as socially inept as his uncle, trying to entice women with lines like "Your legs must be tired because you've been running through my mind all night" or "Excuse me, what's your favorite position on extramarital sex?"

But while earlier installments of the Leisure Suit Larry series played like an adventure game where you needed to find objects to solve different puzzles, "Magna Cum Laude" is mostly a collection of minigames that must be won before you can woo one of 15 or so stereotypical beauties, such as the animal rights fanatic, the down-home country girl, or the Italian stunner with a mouth like Tony Soprano.

As Larry talks to them, you have to move a swimming sperm up and down so it crosses green icons and avoids red ones. If you score high enough, the conversation goes well and you get to move onto the next minigame. Hit too many red icons, and the woman loses interest in you. You'll have to try again.

The conversations are the funniest part of the game because Larry will say anything - and I mean anything - to impress a girl. Unfortunately, players may miss some of the humor because they'll be too busy trying to steer their sperm.

My success with these minigames depended on which version I played. On my PC, the conversation game was tough; I did much better using the Xbox thumbstick. In the strip trampoline game, where you're supposed to push arrow buttons in time to the music, the Xbox responded badly, but I had no trouble on the PC.

Fortunately, if you can't win a game, "Magna Cum Laude" lets you buy your way past it with one of the tokens scattered around the terrain.

In true Leisure Suit Larry tradition, just when you think you're about to score in the sack, something bad usually happens. Security walks into your bedroom. Your new girl only wants to make love if you're dressed like a bundle of flaming sticks. Or your attempt at romance suddenly ends with a flashback to "The Crying Game."

The version available in stores is rated for ages 17 and older because of nudity, use of alcohol, strong language, strong sexual content, and mature humor. "Immature humor" might be a better description.

There is almost no below-the-waist nudity. Anytime someone drops their briefs or panties, a big "Censored" sign covers their abdomen. But you can find at least one exception if you change the controller settings while looking through the peephole in the side of the sorority house. (There may be others; we at PRUDES are still looking.)

And last week, Vivendi made the surprise announcement that an adults-only version, without the censored signs, was available on line.

So, having already shelled out $50 for the Xbox or PlayStation 2 versions (or $30 for the PC title), Larry lovers are being asked to fork over another $35 for "Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude - Uncut and Uncensored."

Finally, maybe these fans will be shocked as well.

Lord of the Rings, the Third Age Ships

Return to Middle-earth to forge a new adventure... Electronic Arts
announced that The Lord of the Rings, The Third Age role-playing game has
shipped and will be on store shelves in time for the holiday season. The
epic quest, in which players will take on the roles of previously
unplayable characters choosing their own path through Middle-earth while
interacting with the heroes and villains of the movie trilogy, is available
for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system, the Xbox videogame
system from Microsoft, Nintendo GameCube, and Game Boy Advance under the EA
GAMES brand.

Based on New Line Cinema and Peter Jackson's acclaimed film adaptations of
J.R.R. Tolkien's classic The Lord of the Rings trilogy, The Lord of the
Rings, The Third Age videogame allows players to adventure through
Middle-earth, building a party of heroes as they journey. Players battle on
the side of the Fellowship, but can unlock additional encounters where they
fight on the side of Sauron as they progress. In the game, players will
interact with key characters of the Fellowship in a unique structure,
taking on individual quests while intersecting the major events of the film
trilogy that drive the story forward such as the epic battles at Helm's
Deep and Minas Tirith. Parties will traverse through both familiar and
seldom-glimpsed locations, using an innovative turn-based battle system as
they fight, encountering the demonic Balrog in the Mines of Moria, or
defending the fallen city of Osgiliath.

The Lord the Rings, The Third Age, was developed by EA's Redwood Shores
studio (Amaze Entertainment developed for the Game Boy Advance), the same
studio that developed the hit The Lord of the Rings, The Return of the King
game. The game is rated "T" (Teen) with descriptor Violence by the ESRB and
has MSRPs of $49.95 (PlayStation 2 console, Xbox, Nintendo GameCube) and
$29.95 (Game Boy Advance). For more information on EA's The Lord of the
Rings games, visit the official franchise website at
http://lordoftherings.eagames.com.

Godzilla: Save the Earth For Playstation 2 Ships

Atari will ship "Godzilla: Save the Earth," an epic monster-on-monster
online fighting game, for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system
and Xbox video game system from Microsoft, this month. Based on the classic
character movie license from Toho Co., Ltd., "Godzilla: Save the Earth"
faithfully recreates the look and feel of the gargantuan film legend and
takes the fighting element of "Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee" -
Atari's chart-topping fighting game which originally shipped in 2002 - to
the next level with online multiplayer fighting, new technology and
gameplay improvements in all major areas. The PlayStation 2 version is
currently available, the Xbox version will be available November 22.

"'Godzilla: Save the Earth' takes the Godzilla interactive experience to
the next level, with the addition of online play, a deeper fighting engine,
sharper and more detailed graphics, and fan-favorite monsters," said Wim
Stocks, Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Atari. "No other
fighting game can come close to matching the amazing fun of four-player
online brawls between titanic creatures. Godzilla fans will love the
authenticity of recreating their favorite film battles with more monsters
than ever while fighting game fans will find a refreshing and completely

fun change of pace from traditional console brawlers."

Both the PlayStation2 and Xbox versions feature a robust online multiplayer component. Up to four players can smash, bash and trash opposing monsters and cities in gargantuan online melees. Players can fight head-to-head in the classic Versus mode; with three or four other players in free-for-all, team, or 1-on-3 Melee mode; or compete to destroy the city in the game's Destruction mode.

In offline play, gamers have several modes from which to choose, including Action, the single-player campaign battling Earth's foes; Challenges, a series of single-player mini-games to complete; Versus, the classic one-on-one showdown; Melee, the two-to-four player battle-fest; and more.

Responding to requests from the worldwide Godzilla fanbase, Atari made certain that "Godzilla: Save the Earth" would feature more than 18 classic Toho movie monsters, each carefully designed to recreate the authentic look and feel of the mega-popular film stars. Monsters returning from "Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee" include Godzilla 2000 and Godzilla 90s, King Ghidorah, Gigan and more, while fan-favorite monsters joining the lineup include Mothra (both larval and adult form), Jet Jaguar, Baragon, SpaceGodzilla, Moguera and more.

In the single-player game, Vorticia, the leader of the Vortaak, sends mind-controlled monsters to Earth to collect Godzilla DNA - "G-Cells" - in order to create her own Super Monster with which to conquer the planet. As Godzilla, the player awakens and must stop the brainwashed monsters from stealing G-Cells while at the same time freeing his fellow monsters from captivity. Throughout the game's missions, Vorticia sends waves of monsters, UFOs and other earth-threatening devices at Godzilla.

The epic battle for earth rages across the globe in more than a dozen massive, destructible city environments based on real world locations, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Osaka and New York. Fantasy locations featured in the game include the infamous Monster Island from the Godzilla films as well as the Vortaak Alien Mothership. Environments have been enhanced and enlarged, and now feature hills, oceans, harbors and mountains. All structures in the game feature advanced destruction mechanics, enabling them to be partially damaged or completely destroyed through multiple impacts. Striking larger buildings dynamically generates gouges before the buildings eventually crumble to the ground.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first Godzilla film and in celebration, Atari has launched http://WWW.GODZILLA.COM, under the license from Toho Co., Ltd., to serve as a central hub of information for everything Godzilla-related, creating a massive one-stop-shop for Kaiju fans to find more information about Godzilla and Godzilla products. The site features "Godzilla: Save the Earth," the upcoming Godzilla film, "Godzilla Final Wars" from Toho Co., Ltd., as well as new Godzilla toys, DVDs and figures.

Developed by Eugene, Oregon-based Pipeworks (http://www.pipeworks.com), the masterminds behind "Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee," "Godzilla: Save the Earth" is now available for an estimated retail price of $39.95 on PlayStation 2 and will be available November 22 on Xbox for the same price.

Hitman: Blood Money Coming In Spring 2005

Eidos, one of the world's leading publishers and developers of
entertainment software, announces the return of the world's deadliest
assassin in Hitman: Blood Money. Developed by Io Interactive, Hitman Blood
Money will be released worldwide in spring 2005 on PlayStation 2, Xbox and
PC.

When assassins from Agent 47's contract agency, The ICA, are systematically
eliminated in a series of hits, it seems a larger, more powerful agency has
entered the fray. For Agent 47 it's business as usual, until suddenly he
loses contact with The ICA. Sensing that he may be the next target, he
travels to America, where he prepares to make a killing.

Agent 47 is back and this time he's paid in cold, hard cash. How the money
is spent will affect his passage through the game and the weapons at his
disposal, resulting in a unique gameplay experience for each player.
Powered by a new version of Io's stunning Glacier engine, Hitman: Blood
Money will deliver the most brutal and realistic simulation of life as the
world's deadliest assassin.

Mike McGarvey, ceo of Eidos says: "The Hitman series is one of Eidos'
biggest franchises and goes from strength to strength with every new
instalment. Io-Interactive is one of the world's most accomplished
developers, and yet again has raised the stakes in terms of graphics and
gameplay with Hitman: Blood Money."

Janos Flosser, managing director of Io-Interactive says: "Considerable time
and effort has been spent developing a new version of the Glacier engine
that enables us to implement many new and exciting features. The quality of
the graphics and A.I. surpasses even our own expectations and this combined
with a gripping narrative and the introduction of some really inventive
characters makes us confident that Blood Money will be the greatest Hitman
title to date."

Website: http://www.hitman.com

                    Trio of Hot New Games Victimized by Piracy

A month before the video game's scheduled release this coming Tuesday,
illegal copies of the hot sci-fi action title "Halo 2" were already
circulating on the Internet. It's had a lot of company lately.

Several highly anticipated games, such as "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas"
and "Half-Life 2," have fallen victim to copyright theft. Illegal, often
incomplete versions have appeared on file-sharing networks, news groups and
Web sites.

"You spend three years of your life pouring everything you have into this
project, and then somebody gets their hands on the game and gives it away
to the world for free," said Brian Jarrard of Microsoft Corp.'s Bungie
Studios, maker of "Halo 2." "We made this, and these guys had no right to
give it out to the public."

High-profile titles are commonly pirated before they are released,
certainly within days after they arrive in stores, said Douglas Lowenstein,
president of the Entertainment Software Association.

In the case of "Halo 2," the French-language version appeared on file-sharing networks and news groups in October.

Microsoft said it was still investigating, working with authorities to track down those responsible. It remains unclear how the leak occurred, but it did not affect the game's release date.

That wasn't the case for "Half-Life 2."

Fans were waiting last fall for the imminent arrival of the sequel to the popular "Half-Life" when unplayable source code from the personal computer game was stolen from developer Valve Corp. and circulated over the Internet. The investigation has led to one arrest so far. FBI agent Ray Lauer in Seattle identified the suspect as a male from Germany but had no other details.

"Half-Life 2" developer Valve Corp. said the game will arrive in store shelves on Nov. 16.

By the time New York-based Rockstar Games, a division of Take-Two Interactive Software Inc., released its PlayStation 2 crime saga "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas" on Oct. 26, an illegally obtained version as well pictures of the game and the instruction manual had been on the Internet for a week.

A spokesman said Rockstar is investigating. No one has been charged or arrested thus far.

While Lowenstein of the ESA said it can be difficult to pin the leaks on a single cause, he blamed multinational crime syndicates for much of the theft. Security experts, meanwhile, say the problem often stems from employees involved in game creation.

Gabe Zichermann, vice president of strategy and communications of security company Trymedia Systems, said video games are particularly vulnerable because so many people handle the games - from artists and programmers to workers who package the final product.

He said 70 percent of corporate security breakdowns are caused by insiders.

Many consumers, meanwhile, said they'd never consider pirated versions. Not only would it spoil the surprise, gamers tend to be devoted followers of game creators.

Soon after the "Halo 2" leak, the forums at halo.bungie.org were closed so the experience wouldn't be ruined come November.

"I was expecting to get all sorts of hate mail, but instead I've had hundreds of letters from people saying thank you, you've helped keep us pure," said Claude Errera, a 38-year-old from Bethany, Conn., who runs the popular fan site.

Fans helped track and curb the spread of the pirated versions of "Half-Life 2" and "Halo 2."

Jarrard credited incensed fans and community policing efforts for informing Bungie about Web sites hosting the illegal "Halo 2." The leak certainly hasn't affected sales - Microsoft said more than 1.5 million copies of the Xbox exclusive have been pre-ordered.

And Valve, based in the Seattle suburb of Kirkland, Wash., said its legions
of devoted gamers provided thousands of tips that helped lead to the
arrest.

There are many obstacles to snaring the thieves, much less prosecuting
them. Many are based overseas, protected by a patchwork of law enforcement
and copyright laws.

Efforts to stop the piracy include the ESA's Online Enforcement Program,
which claims to have shut down more than 35,000 sites dealing with pirated
games since 1998.

Lowenstein conceded that piracy will be tough to stamp out.

"The problem and challenge with piracy is that there are people out there
on a worldwide basis who've identified piracy as a very profitable
enterprise," he said. "You don't end this problem overnight."

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                       A-ONE's Headline News
                The Latest in Computer Technology News
                    Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

                 Companies Scramble to Deal With Spyware

The people who call Dell Inc.'s customer service line often have no idea
why their computers are running so slow. The ones who call America Online
Inc. can't necessarily explain why Internet connections keep dropping. And
those who file error reports with Microsoft Corp. don't always know why
their computers inexplicably crash.

Sometimes, the company that gets the complaint is rightly to blame. But
with alarming frequency, officials at these and other technology companies
say they are tracing customer problems back to one culprit: spyware.

In the past year, spyware problems have become especially pernicious,
leaving companies scrambling to respond to customers who don't necessarily
realize they have spyware.

Companies are concerned about the cost of dealing with such calls. But
perhaps more worrisome, they fear customers will wrongly blame them.

Spyware generally refers to programs that land on computers without their
owners' knowledge. They can deliver hordes of pop-up ads, redirect people
to unfamiliar search engines or, in rare cases, steal personal information.

Users most often get them by downloading free games or file-sharing
software - and consenting to language buried deep within a licensing
agreement.

And because they consented, "in some ways it ties our hands because we
can't legally interfere," said Mike George, head of Dell's U.S. consumer

business.

Russ Cooper, senior scientist with TruSecure Corp., said a longstanding
fear of legal repercussions is likely one reason companies have only
recently begun to address the problem.

But now that spyware has become epidemic, he believes Microsoft and other
companies ought to do much more to educate the public - such as by running
public-awareness commercials akin to the old Smokey Bear slogan "Only you
can prevent forest fires."

The industry's incentive is simple survival, Cooper said.

"It's almost ridiculous," said Bill Bane, 33, a derivatives trader in New
York. "You buy a computer. It's new, bright and shiny and looks great and
three months down the road, it's infested with spyware."

Though he recognizes he's partly to blame for his surfing habits, he
believes his service provider and manufacturer share responsibility.

"Either the Internet providers figure out a way to clean up the Net or
people are just going to pull the plug at home," Bane said. "It ain't worth
it."

Microsoft officials blame unwanted software for up to one-third of
application crashes on Windows XP computers. AOL estimates that just three
such programs together cause some 300,000 Internet disconnections per day.

Forrester Research analyst Jonathan Penn said a spyware-related support
call can cost $15 to $45, and companies may lose business.

"Security is a component of loyalty," Penn said. "People, they want all
these various services, but they expect security to come with it."

Some companies have begun offering spyware-detection tools - Yahoo Inc.'s
is free, while AOL and EarthLink Inc. limit key features to paid
subscribers. Anti-spyware software that Hewlett-Packard Co. began shipping
with new computers in June comes with a 30-day free trial; it's about $20 a
year after that. Dell will have similar software by the holidays.

Most tools leave it to users to decide what to do with any programs found.

EarthLink's tool - and AOL's by default - will quarantine spyware without
removing it completely. EarthLink spokesman Jerry Grasso said some users
may decide that having spyware is worth the nuisance in exchange for the
free program that came with it.

Microsoft's Service Pack 2 security upgrade for Windows XP warns users of
spyware and other unexpected programs before they are loaded. And the
company plans spyware-specific tools to give users more control, said Paul
Bryan, a director in the security, business and technology unit. He said
it was too soon to say when they would be available.

Advertisers are responding, too. After using the criticized delivery
methods for nearly two years, Verizon Communications Inc. suspended those
campaigns in July.

"We realize it was being raised as a consumer issue," spokesman John Bonomo
said. "We wanted to make sure we were keeping with the trust they place in
us."

Sneaky Spyware Becomes Scourge of Internet

Spyware, an amorphous class of software that mostly gets onto computers
without their users' knowledge, has become epidemic in the past year as
people spend more time online and spyware developers get more aggressive.
The resource-hungry programs often render machines unusable.

"It makes spam look like a walk in the park," said Bob Bowman, chief
executive of Major League Baseball's Internet unit, which in June started
banning new advertisers from using such techniques.

San Francisco marketing consultant David Eckstein turned on his computer
one day and launched his Web browser, just as he had every day. This time,
however, CNN.com did not automatically open. Instead, the page was a search
engine he'd never heard of.

Eckstein tried changing the browser settings back to CNN but the search
engine would return whenever he rebooted. Finally, he just gave up, yet
another victim of spyware.

"It makes you want to throw your computer out the window," Eckstein said.

As part of a government-backed study, technicians visited Jenna Dye
recently in Young Harris, Ga., and found 1,300 spyware-related items on
her machine.

"It would shut itself down in the middle of doing stuff. We had lots of
pop-ups. The (CD-ROM) drawers would pop open," the mother of two
complained. "It's frustrating. We spent $1,800 on our computer and we
didn't want to use it."

Until the machine was cleaned up, Dye and her husband would make 2 1/2 hour
trips to the nearest mall to avoid shopping online. "We use it every day
now again," she said.

Spyware was found on the computers of 80 percent of participants in the
study, conducted by America Online Inc. and the National Cyber Security
Alliance.

Since EarthLink Inc. began offering free anti-spyware tools, each scan has
found an average of six such programs. When including "cookie" data files
that online sources use to track user behavior, the average rises to 26.

The most common type of spyware is more properly termed adware, its main
goal to generate pop-up and other ads.

Browser hijackers, the kind Eckstein got, direct users to rogue search
engines, from which spyware developers or distributors get a commission.
Dialers scam users by making international phone calls that carry hefty
per-minute surcharges. A rare but malicious form can steal passwords and
other confidential data.

The intrusive programs aren't always well-written and can use resources
inefficiently.

"Often, you don't just have one. You might have a half-dozen or even a

dozen that can bring your computer to a screeching halt," said Tim Lordan, staff director of the Internet Education Foundation. "They are undermining confidence in the Internet. People are getting fed up."

The most common way to get spyware, including adware, is to download file-sharing software, screensavers and other free programs that rely on revenues from such tagalong programs to cover costs. Spyware developers consider it part of the bargain, though they also depend on users' fascination with freebies.

"A lot of them say, 'I'm going to get free smileys in my e-mail or some sort of free ... download without realizing the resource drain the sponsoring software is going to cause," said Wayne Porter, co-founder of SpywareGuide.com.

Users themselves invite spyware by breezing through prompts and not reading licensing agreements they are required to accept. Consent to spyware is often buried there.

Many of the larger companies whose software is delivered online with freebies have tried to clean up their act to the point that many don't actually harvest data anymore, though the term "spyware" has stuck.

And their methods for disclosure and removal have improved in response to consumer complaints.

But for every reputable operation, scores of shadier ones, often located abroad, are intent on tricking users into accepting spyware without any accompanying software.

In a technique known as drive-by downloading, code embedded within pop-up ads or on Web sites that offer free songs, games or even pornography can instruct computers to begin downloading the rogue programs with minimal warning.

Sometimes, those warning prompts even are programmed to keep popping up until users finally give up and say "yes," said Neel Mehta of Internet Security Systems Inc.

And exploiting known flaws with Microsoft Corp.'s Windows operating system or the Internet Explorer browser, spyware developers can bypass the prompts entirely.

"In the rush of doing things, people get confused and end up hitting one wrong button, and all of a sudden stuff is on your computer and you can't get it off," restaurant manager Damien LaRuffa said.

His Washington, D.C., restaurants lost two computers for a few days because an assistant manager apparently was tricked into accepting a fake pitch for anti-spyware software. LaRuffa said the repair bill exceeded $400.

Matt Davin, technical services manager at a repair shop in Walla Walla, Wash., estimates that half his jobs are directly tied to spyware. Customers, he said, often blame it on their kids downloading free programs.

Spyware can infect power users as well. Just ask Ricky Rodrigue, who runs Dell Inc.'s customer support center. His son invited spyware onto his home machine while downloading games, and he once found more than 100 spyware items on his work machine.

"That's how creative (they are) and how challenging it is to protect PCs," Rodrigue said.

The less innocuous programs can usually be removed manually or by running one of several anti-spyware tools, many free. The nastier ones, however, immunize themselves and persist.

"Almost every new threat released today comes with a reinstaller so that as soon as you try to remove it, it goes and reloads it," said Ron Franczyk, co-founder of anti-spyware vendor Giant Company Software Inc.

Many spyware files carry names that mimic key Windows components and even hide among them in folders typically reserved for system files.

"How do you know if you need a spool.exe?" asked Vilis Ositis, chief technology officer at Blue Coat Systems Inc. "Windows comes with thousands of files. How do you know which ones you need and which ones are spyware?"

Congress is working on a ban, and industry groups have launched efforts to educate consumers and fight back with technology. Experts believe a solution will ultimately involve a combination of law enforcement, education and engineering.

"We're at a crossroads," said Ari Schwartz, associate director of the Center for Democracy and Technology, a privacy-advocacy group.

Fail to properly address spyware, Schwartz warned, and "users will not want to use the Internet for commerce, for government services, for interaction with other people. We'll lose the great potential of the Internet."

Users Often Invite Spyware Trouble

Tagalong software, generally known as spyware, is an especially tricky security threat because user carelessness is nearly always to blame.

All Dennis McGrath wanted was to belong. Just about everyone else in his chat room began displaying new kinds of smiley faces with their messages. So he downloaded a free program to get some, too.

Little did McGrath know he would also get a pesky toolbar that keeps reappearing no matter how he tries to disable it.

"When you go install something, a big window should come up with big letters and tell you in the first paragraph, 'Here, we're going to install this, this and that,'" said McGrath, a former truck driver in San Jose, Calif.

McGrath realizes he might have agreed to the toolbar in accepting a licensing agreement he didn't bother to read.

Craig Herold, a retired phone company employee in Fort Wayne, Ind., allows that software developers may have the law behind them when they include consent within the licenses, but "everything that is legal is not necessarily ethical."

At one point, he broke his computer trying to remove spyware himself. It took three technicians at the local repair shop to figure out how to

restore his machine.

Indeed, some repair shops blame spyware for more than half the trouble they're seeing. At Dell Inc., spyware accounts for 15 percent of service calls, up from 2 percent in August 2003.

And it comes down to the same reason: Users don't know better.

Not that spyware developers make it easy on them. Many ride on the same techniques that legitimate software like Macromedia Inc.'s Flash use to get onto machines.

"People are just so used to clicking OK, OK, OK," said David Purcell, owner of PCTechBytes in suburban Philadelphia.

Spyware is the first thing technicians look for when customers visit Purcell's shop. And in 20 percent of spyware cases, he said, the problem is so bad that it's easier, and cheaper, simply to reformat the computer's hard drive and start from scratch.

How can users avoid spyware?

For one, they should read licensing agreements that come with free software. Many will name programs that tag along. For more details on what such programs do, try typing their names into a search engine or a spyware database like SpywareGuide.com's.

"If they would read the end-user license agreement, they would prevent 80 percent of the spyware," said Andrew Newman, co-founder of Giant Company Software Inc.

Also, keep Internet Explorer security settings at medium or higher so prompts will warn you of so-called drive-by downloads. Read those prompts carefully. Alternative browsers like Opera or Firefox or even alternative platforms like Mac computers can reduce risks greatly.

Some spyware bypasses such prompts entirely by taking advantage of known flaws with Internet Explorer or the Windows operating system. Get the latest security updates from Microsoft Corp. Installing the Service Pack 2 update for Windows XP (news - web sites) computers should give users more warnings.

Users should also scan their systems regularly using one of a number of spyware scanners and removal tools, many of which are available for free. Be sure to obtain the latest definitions before running a scan, and try more than one because the tools vary in what they catch.

Dell Inc. and the nonprofit Internet Education Foundation recently launched a spyware education campaign. Video tutorials and other tips are available at getnetwise.org.

Teaching users safe practices won't be easy, but it's not impossible, said Neel Mehta of Internet Security Systems Inc. Though it took years, he notes, users today are more cautious about e-mail attachments that contain viruses.

Net Banking Fraudsters Step Up the 'Phishing' Scam

Fraudsters have developed a potent new computer program that steals Internet banking customers' details by duping them into opening up a bogus e-mail, a British security firm said Wednesday.

Security technicians at MessageLabs fear it could become a favorite tool for "phishing" fraudsters, who lure computer users to a fake Web site and steal their banking and credit card details.

In the past, a phishing victim would have had to go through a relatively cumbersome procedure of opening the bogus e-mail and then clicking on a file attachment or Web site address located within the message to be conned.

Now, the trick starts the moment the victim opens the seemingly innocuous e-mail.

The program has been circulating on the Internet for the past week, but in relatively small numbers, said MessageLabs.

The company added that the e-mails target three Brazilian banks - Caixa, Unibanco, and Bradesco - but the fear is it could easily be re-engineered to target almost any online bank.

"We've only seen about 30 copies. In volume terms, it's small. But people should be on the look-out as this could be the next stage in the phishing problem," a MessageLabs spokeswoman said.

MessageLabs said that once a person opens the fraudulent e-mail, a tiny computer program known as a "script" immediately begins running.

It embeds itself on the victim's computer and overwrites bookmarked Web addresses or automatically redirects the victim from the intended banking site to an authentic-looking fake site that captures banking details.

Phishing frauds have become more and more prevalent over the past 18 months as more consumers do their personal banking on the Internet. British police recently estimated phishing scams cost UK banks an estimated 60 million pounds last year.

"Most banks have advised their customers to be wary of any e-mail asking for personal banking details, but in this case all they have to do is open an apparently innocent e-mail and their bank details could be silently sabotaged," said Alex Shipp, senior anti-virus technologist at MessageLabs.

The company said that if the computer user deactivates Windows scripting host program on the PC, they run less of a risk of falling prey to the scam.

SpamNet Becomes SafetyBar 4.0 and Goes Anti-Phishing

In test after test Cloudmark SpamNet has done a great job of keeping spam out of the inbox while misfiling few or no valid messages. It has done so without analyzing incoming messages using keywords, patterns, or heuristics. Instead, it relies on the common sense of the million-plus members of its spam-fighting community. Once a few trusted members mark a particular message as spam, no other members will even see that message.

Now Cloudmark is extending this same treatment to phishing scams and fraudulent e-mail. To mark this expansion of coverage, it has changed the product's name to Cloudmark SafetyBar 4.0.

Just like SpamNet, SafetyBar integrates with Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express. The Outlook version handles POP3, IMAP, or Exchange mail; the separate Outlook Express version just filters POP3 and IMAP. The spam-blocking system is unchanged, but now the toolbar includes separate buttons to "Block Spam" or "Block Fraud." In most cases, fraudulent messages will go straight to the Spam folder. On the fraud-prevention side, it's as simple as that.

The product also has another side: Determining, through the Cloudmark Rating system, which e-commerce sites are valid enough to be trusted by consumers. Any site can request free membership in the Program 1 level of this system by signing up at http://rating.cloudmark.com. Member sites send a copy of each newsletter and mass mailing to a special address at Cloudmark. When a new mailing arrives, Cloudmark associates its unique fingerprint with the corresponding member site. The site's reputation improves when Cloudmark members refrain from marking its mailings as spam.

A site that maintains a sufficiently high reputation can move up to the Program 2 level. When the user views an e-mail message from a Program 2 site, the SafetyBar displays a "Cloudmark Rated" button and logo. Clicking on the button brings up a window proclaiming that the site is a "Cloudmark Rated Spam-free e-mail sender" and offering more details about the rating system.

Individual SafetyBar users can still choose to block messages from Cloudmark Rated senders. A message box will point out that the sender is Cloudmark Rated and ask whether the user really wants to block messages. If the answer is Yes, all messages from that sender will be blocked locally and Cloudmark will receive notification, but the message will not be marked as spam for the community. Program 2 members can get statistics from Cloudmark as to how many community members received their mailings and how many blocked them. Cloudmark can, of course, retract the Cloudmark Rated status of a site that backslides. The Cloudmark Rating program already has 500 members at the Program 1 level and a handful of Program 2 members (with more soon to come). We can't predict how many sites will eventually join, but the process seems simple enough.

Current paid SpamNet users will receive a free update to SafetyBar; the product is also available as a 30-day free trial. Even after the trial expires, the antifraud features will continue working: It will still move fraudulent e-mail to the Spam folder, and will still flag Cloudmark Rated messages. E-commerce sites can arrange to distribute the free version to their members, to help them receive valid mail and avoid fraud.

Two Guilty in First Felony Spam Conviction

A brother and sister who sent unsolicited junk e-mail to millions of America Online customers were convicted Wednesday in the nation's first felony prosecution of distributors of spam.

After returning their verdict, jurors immediately began deliberating punishments for Jeremy D. Jaynes, 30, and Jessica DeGroot, 28, both of the Raleigh, N.C., area. Each could receive jail terms for fraudulently sending

junk mail.

A third defendant, Richard Rutkowski, was acquitted. Jurors deliberated for
a day and a half.

Prosecutors compared Jaynes and DeGroot to modern-day snake-oil salesmen
who used the Internet to peddle junk like a "FedEx refund processor" that
supposedly allowed people to earn $75 an hour while working from home.

In one month alone, Jaynes received 10,000 credit card orders, each for
$39.95, for the processor.

"This was just a case of fraud," said state prosecutor Samuel E. Fishel IV.
"This is a snake-oil salesman in a new format."

Prosecutors asked the jury to impose a maximum sentence of 15 years in
prison for Jaynes, and to consider an unspecified prison term for his
sister.

Defense lawyers asked jurors to spare the defendants prison terms.

David Oblon, representing Jaynes, argued that it was inappropriate for
prosecutors to seek what he called an excessive punishment, given that this
is the first prosecution under the Virginia law. He also noted that his
client, a North Carolina resident, would have been unaware of the Virginia
law.

Loudoun County Circuit Court Judge Thomas Orne has not yet ruled on an
earlier motion asking that the case be dismissed. He said during the trial
that he had a hard time allowing the prosecution of DeGroot and Rutkowski
to go forward to the jury.

The case against Rutkowski was the weakest, said his attorney Leo Andrews
Jr., "and I would think the commonwealth would agree about that as well."

Virginia prosecuted the case under a law that took effect last year that
bars people from sending bulk e-mail that is unsolicited and masks its
origin. AOL, which is a unit of New York-based Time Warner Inc., is based
in Dulles, Va.

Attorney General Jerry W. Kilgore called Virginia's anti-spam law the
toughest in America.

"Spam is a nuisance to millions of Americans, but it is also a major
problem for businesses large and small because the thousands of unwanted
e-mails create havoc as they attempt to conduct business," Kilgore said in
a statement.

                    Spammers Ignore CAN-SPAM...Again

Compliance with the federal CAN-SPAM Act remained flat in October,
according to numbers released Thursday.

MXLogic, which tracks spammers' monthly compliance, reported that only four
percent of all unsolicited commercial e-mail met the law's requirements,
the same ratio as in September.

CAN-SPAM compliance has ranged from a high of 4 percent (in September and October) to a low of 0.54 percent (in July).

"The chronically low level of compliance with the law underscores the need for progress on other fronts, namely industry cooperation on improving the security in e-mail protocols and identity management, end-user education, and continued advances in anti-spam technology," said Scott Chasin, the chief technology officer of MX Logic, in a statement.

Chasin also said he was optimistic that next week's Email Authentication Summit, which will be co-hosted by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), will move along industry cooperation.

The summit plans to focus on domain-level authentication systems, such as the existing Sender Policy Framework (SPF), and the proposed Sender ID from Microsoft and Yahoo's DomainKeys.

"My hope is that the Summit will catalyze the industry to move beyond [talk on] authentication to its implementation. The industry needs to come to agreement not only on the standard, but also on accreditation and reputation services that can vouch for the domain as well as its e-mail sending history," said Chasin.

The Email Authentication Summit will be held in Washington, D.C., next Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 9 and 10.

Internet Explorer Losing Market Share

Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE) browser is slowly losing market share, according to a recent report from WebSideStory, a Web analytics provider.

The company found that the percentage of Mozilla and Firefox browser adoption has increased among U.S. computer users.

IE use dropped to 92.9 percent among browsers as of the end of October, marking a decline of 0.8 percentage points since WebSideStory's last report in early September.

IE's slight market loss shows a continued steady decline for the browser's use. In June, IE had 95.5 percent market share, according to WebSideStory.

Although there are numerous alternatives to IE, Firefox seems to have the most traction. As a nod to the browser's growing popularity, WebSideStory reported on its market share for the first time in its recent report, citing a 3 percent toehold for Firefox.

A product of the Mozilla Foundation, Firefox has become something of a darling to the alternate-browser crowd. But it might not be a well-kept secret among them for long.

A group called Spread Firefox has been aggressively promoting the browser with help from company donors and "community champions." After a donation-outreach effort with Mozilla, the organization has raised $250,000 for promotional campaigns, and will soon be placing an ad in the New York Times to tout the browser's benefits.

Despite the minor loss of market share, Microsoft will continue to dominate the browser world for some time, many analysts believe.

Although the early days of public Web use sparked browser wars, Yankee Group analyst Tony White told NewsFactor, "There were battles, but Microsoft won. And it's still the winner."

Even a browser that has an aggressive campaign will find it difficult to break Microsoft's lock, White noted. Safari and Opera browsers, heavily pushed by Apple and Opera Software, still only reach about 1 percent of the market, according to WebSideStory.

Microsoft is expected to unveil additional IE developments in the future, White pointed out, and those may bring back the slight market share that it has lost.

"The people who love Firefox are very vocal and determined, but that doesn't change the fact that IE dominates the market," White said.

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